

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2203

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 5760

FOR COMMERCE

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP LE

SUBJ: BEIRUT PORT EXPANSION PROJECT

REF: STATE 93598

1. REGARDING ARTICLE 1.07 OF PORT STUDY TERMS OF REFERENCE, BID INVITATIONS ON GOL TENDERS USUALLY REQUIRE PROVISIONAL GUARANTEE VARYING BETWEEN 5 AND 10 PERCENT OF CONTRACT VALUE. WE HAVE NOT YET HEARD ANY BALLPARK ESTIMATE OF VALUE THIS CONSULTING CONTRACT AND AUTONOMOUS PORT BUDGET IS NOT PUBLISHED. FROM VARIOUS SOURCES WE UNDERSTAND THAT GOL ESTIMATES LL100 MILLION AS TOTAL COST OF PORT EXPANSION PROJECT INCLUDING PURCHASE EQUIPMENT AND NEW WAREHOUSE CONSTRUCTION FOR PRESENT PORT, CONSULTING CONTRACT FOR SHORT AND LONG TERM DEVELOPMENT, CONSTRUCTION OF FOURTH BASIN AND COST OF OTHER WORKS AND EQUIPMENT RESULTING FROM CONSULTANT'S STUDY. REGARDING ARTICLES 2.12 AND 2.26, GOL TENDERING REGULATIONS REQUIRE 10 PERCENT GUARANTEE BONDS FROM WINNING BIDDERS.

2. FRANCH BIDDER(S) MAY HAVE SOME ADVANTAGE DUE TO FRIENCH ORIENTATION OF PORT OFFICIALS (PORT COMPANY WAS FRENCH CONCESSION UNTIL 1960); ALSO, FRENCH AMBASSADOR PROBABLY WILL NOT SPARE EFFORTS TO SWAY DECISION FOR FRENCH FIRM. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LEBANESE AGENTS OF THE VARIOUS BIDDERS COULD ALSO BE A FACTOR (ALL AGENTS

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CLAIM TO HAVE INFLUENCE WITH APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES)
BUT ONE WE CANNOT EVALUATE, PARTICULARLY WITHOUT KNOWING
WHO SUCH AGENTS ARE. ALL IN ALL, HOWEVER, WE
BELIEVE THAT US FIRMS WITH COMPETITIVE BIDS WILL HAVE
FIGHTING CHANCE FOR THIS CONTRACT. US EXPERTISE WELL
APPRECIATED HERE. ALSO, CONCERNED OFFICIALS SHOULD BE
DESIROUS OF SELECTING A WELL- QUALIFIED CONSULTANT SINCE
PORT CONGESTION HAS BECOME SERIOUS, CHRONIC AND HIGHLY
PUBLICIZED PROBLEM.

3. US FIRMS CAN OF COURSE COUNT ON ALL POSSIBLE EMBASSY
SUPPORT. WE WILL CONTINUE REPORT ANY INFO WE THINK MAY BE
HELPFUL TO BIDDERS.
HOUGHTON

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NMAFVVZCZ

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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